HD1695 S383A7 1975

SOUTH SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Annual Report to the People

FISCAL YEAR 1974-75

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The Annual Report

During our 37-year existence as "the water conservation district" in South County, we have been quietly and efficiently accomplishing the purpose for which we were formed.

Your present Board of Directors is proud of the long record of the District and proud to be continuing the traditions of the original Board in fulfilling the water needs of South County.

Our main function has been and will continue to be the impounding of run-off waters for use in the dry months by percolation into our underground reservoir.

The many years of District operation have proved the wisdom of the people in forming the District, as the impounded supply has been sufficient to carry over through dry cycles with only a minimum of water shortages.

However, times and conditions are forcing changes. The Board is aware that the growing population and the agricultural and urban land use changes are requiring more water each year, to the point where our supply is not too much greater than our demand, and our cushion for a dry cycle becomes less with each acre converted.

Your Board has carefully examined the alternatives and options open to the people of the District, options dealing with consolidation with the north district or remaining independent; and we have taken into account the comparative costs of these options dealing with district operations, administration, responsiveness to local need and local concern; and the ability to deal with local conditions and local people.

Your Board of Directors has unanimously accepted the challenge and responsibility to continue as an independent district, believing that the people of South County are capable of accepting the responsibility for their own needs.

We have been examining the alternatives of supplementing our water supply. Here we have several choices: we can raise Uvas Dam or develop Hayes Valley--both viable projects in which we would gain through multiple use, flood control and recreation, as well as water supply; or we can depend solely on imported water. It appears shortsighted to import water from outside the area (San Felipe) when we have an adequate supply going to waste right here. Hopefully, the next year will indicate which target we must zero in on for water within the next ten years.

Meanwhile, the Board has determined that the District must embark on a water user conservation program so as to stretch our supply. We are going to ask that everyone become and stay water conscious. The Board has also determined that an accurate measurement of water use be implemented; and this means well registration, pump meters, or other methods of determining the yield from every underground water source in the District.

It is only fair that everyone should pay for the water they use, in direct proportion to the amount. This approach will be necessary to pay for any additional supplies whether imported or impounded in enlarged or new reservoirs.

It is also fair to inform the reader that we are being "assisted" in this determination by the "North District," who believe they have enough authority over us to do it themselves and to bill or tax us accordingly. Needless to say, we do not conform to this belief and if any adverse action is taken, the courts will have to sort out the authority.

If you live in the valley floor north of the San Benito county line (Pajaro River) and south of a line drawn through Middle and Tennant Avenues, down Old Highway 101 to Watsonville Road and including parts of Paradise Valley, you are served by and are a part of the South Santa Clara Valley Water Conservation District, or South County Water as it is better known.

Since we were established under State law in 1938, we have been providing for the water needs of an area of 34,505 acres, 28,500 of which are irrigated. It is estimated that 50 to 60 thousand acre feet of water are pumped each year from our supply. One acre foot is 325,900 gallons or one acre (43,560 square feet) covered with water one foot deep.

The problem of insufficient water, a lowering water table and dry wells due to a demand greater than the ability of the natural rainfall to replenish, especially in "dry" years, was the basic reason for developing a supplemental supply for recharge. Completion of the Chesbro Dam in 1956 and the Uvas Dam in 1957 made possible the raising and maintaining of our water table to an acceptable level, by providing controlled releases of water into Uvas and Llagas Creeks for percolation underground. This practice has operated in an extremely efficient manner and has been further augmented by the acquisition, through dedication, of a 19-acre gravel excavation pit between Lena Avenue and Llagas Creek. This facility, named the "Ball Percolation Pond," is in the approximate center of our main percolation area for South County.

Our dams, the Chesbro (named in honor of Dr. Elmer Chesbro, the moving spirit behind the District's formation and president of the Board until his death) has a capacity of 8,086 acre feet and the Uvas (after the Uvas Creek) has a capacity of 10,000 acre feet. These give us a total supplemental supply capacity of 18,086 acre feet. They also serve to reduce flood damage and provide recreation, as well as the all-important water supply. We have "captured" less than half of the average water flow available at the dam sites throughout our years of operation.

During the past year, we released 14,595 acre feet from Uvas Reservoir and 8,213 acre feet from Chesbro Reservoir. We percolated 21,668 acre feet of this total into our underground supplies.

Five men administer the affairs of the district. Elected for staggered terms of four years, each represents a different area, so that the interests of everyone are properly looked after. Present members of the Board are Alfred Angelino (President, Gilroy Area 3), George Azevedo (Vice President, Gilroy Area 1), John Martin (Gilroy Area 2), Leland Dauberg (Morgan Hill Area 5), and Marion "Ray" Gwinn (San Martin Area 4). Lee and Ray are long-time members and Ray is a former president of the Board. With such local control, it is possible to be quickly responsive to local needs.

Highlights of the Past Year
(July 1 '74-June 30 '75)

As the year began, Director Raymond Gwinn, while remaining on the Board of Directors, stepped down as president and Director Fred Angelino was appointed to head the Board. Mr. Gwinn had served with distinction as president since the death of Dr. Chesbro, the District's founding president, in August 1969.

Increasing agricultural land use changes and urbanization of our area continously places new demands on our underground water supply and imposes new challenges to the District to conserve these supplies.

Investigations continued on the possibility of creating a reservoir in Hayes Valley to serve for flood control, water conservation and recreation. Federal assistance was requested through the Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to its great value in flood prevention, this plan is desirable as a source of high quality water, even if San Felipe water becomes available later.

Discussions began on the need for an accurate measurement of water use and groundwater use charges with which to more equally assess water costs to the user. A Citizens' Committee has been formed to consider the matter in all its aspects: its value as a conservation measure and as an equitable way of paying according to the quantity used, and the fairest means of assessing charges. The following citizens are members of the committee: Mike Kennedy, Jack Sturla (Chairman), Richard Brabant, Bob Lindeleaf, George Voss, Ernest Bellezza, R. Frechette, John Jones, Bill Workman, Bill Agler, Louis Bonino, John Hughan, and Min Miyamura.

As the year ended, arrangements were made to better meet the responsibilities of the District by setting up a new office and employing a full-time secretary-manager, operations engineer, and office secretary.

Financial Condition

Following is a simplified and unaudited statement of our financial condition on June 30, 1975:

We own 2 dams (Chesbro and Uvas) which cost $3,426,642.

We still owe for these 2 dams $2,111,543.

We are paying 2 percent to 4 percent interest on this loan, amounting this year to $56,470.

During this year, we reduced the loan by $55,000

The land in the District had an assessed value of $35,650,072.

Our tax rate was 58.1 cent per $100 of assessed value (land only).

We received $195,790 in taxes.

We received $22,984 in interest on our reserve funds.

We spent $28,049 to operate the District.

During the year, we accumulated reserves of $79,255 towards loan retirement and to maintain our properties.

Plans for the Coming Year

During Fiscal Year 1976, which began on July 1, 1975, your Board of Directors plans to continue to explore in detail the possibilities of creating the Hayes Valley Reservoir or the raising of Uvas Dam, with outside financial assistance, to further conserve our local water resources and provide high quality water at a cost at least comparable to imported supplies.

We will also explore the possibilities for bringing San Felipe Project water into our District to augment our local supply. Our requirements for distribution are simple and inexpensive. We hope to avoid paying the heavy overhead costs involved in buying the water through a second agency with high distribution costs; this may result in a separate agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, administrator of the San Felipe Project.

We also plan to seek legislative action by the State Legislature to preserve the independent status we have had since our establishment in 1938. A recent Board resolution was: "This Board intends to exercise its normal functions to the fullest extent of its authority to carry out the programs and objectives necessary to the welfare of the people of the District."

Sincerely,

Alfred R Angelino
George Azevedo
Marion R. Gwinn
Leland Dauberg
John H Martin

Alfred R. Angelino, President
George Azevedo, Vice-President
Marion R. Gwinn, Member
Leland Dauberg, Member
John (Jack) Martin, Member